

2012-2013 GHANA COUNTRY GUIDELINES FOR U.S. FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS AND STUDENTS

The Fulbright Program, sponsored and administered by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the United States Department of State, awards scholarships to lecture, conduct research, and study abroad. Overseas, Fulbright programs are the responsibility of the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the U.S. Embassy in Accra, Ghana.

The country guidelines contain **summary** information about the Fulbright award, logistical and program support provided through the Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), contact information for the Public Affairs Section (PAS) and/or the U.S. Embassy, and advisory information about your host country. The country guidelines are an important resource for you throughout the duration of your grant. Please consult the guidelines for important information needed before arrival in the host country, departure, and arrival to the host country. This overview of privileges will be supplemented by PAS in further written and oral communication. Please note that information in these Guidelines is subject to change.

THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION OF THE U.S. EMBASSY IN GHANA

The Public Affairs Section (PAS) is responsible for managing the Fulbright Program in Ghana. The Cultural Affairs Officer (CAO) is Traci Mell. The CAO is assisted by Cultural Affairs Specialist Nii Sarpei Nunoo and Cultural Affairs Assistant Aisha S. Nartey.

The PAS staff may be reached using the following e-mail addresses:

Traci L. Mell: MellTL@state.gov
Nii Sarpei Nunoo: NunooNS@state.gov
Aisha S. Nartey: AnyanAS@state.gov

The PAS office is located in the American Embassy compound, No. 24 Fourth Circular Road, Cantonments, Accra. The Embassy is open 7:30a.m.-5:00p.m. Monday-Thursday, and 7:30a.m.-12:30p.m. on Friday. The Embassy and PAS can be reached by telephone at the following numbers:

PAS via Embassy switchboard:	011-233-30-274-1000
PAS direct line:	011-233-30-274-1156
PAS fax line:	011-233-30-274-1659
Embassy after-hours number	011-233-30-274-1775 (Marine-on-Duty)

Fulbright scholars/students in the U.S. may write to PAS at the following address: Public Affairs Officer, Department of State, 2020 Accra Place, Washington, D.C. 20521-2020.

The Embassy website is: <http://ghana.usembassy.gov>

THE FULBRIGHT GRANT AND THE BINATIONAL NATURE OF THE PROGRAM

The Fulbright Program is administered in accordance with regulations established by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB). The Board has ruled that Fulbright grant funds cannot duplicate benefits received under other auspices. Therefore, grantees, who receive host government or host institution financial contributions (for example, international travel, per diem/subsistence/housing allowance) in cash or kind, do not receive allowances for these benefits in their grants. Grantees who receive a concurrent grant to the same country under other auspices may have their Fulbright grants reduced if Fulbright grant benefits are duplicated by the other grant.

Governments and institutions in host countries support the exchange program in two ways: through (a) *monetary contributions*, which result in a sharing of program costs or (b) provision of *non-monetary assistance* to enhance the exchange experience for the guest scholar.

WHAT THE FULBRIGHT GRANT PROVIDES

For Student Grantees

Fulbright student grants have two components: (1) a base amount and (2) a monthly maintenance allowance. Additional funds may be included in your grant as allowances and are described separately. Grant benefits authorized by ECA are paid in U.S. dollars through the Institute of International Education (IIE).

1. The **base amount** is provided to cover initial or one-time start-up expenses such as:
 - a. Unaccompanied and/or Excess Baggage
 - b. Miscellaneous Costs, such as visa fees, permits, medical exams, immunizations, etc.This is a fixed sum in each grant and may not reimburse all expenses completely.
2. A monthly **maintenance allowance** is provided to cover recurring subsistence needs such as housing, fuel, utilities, and food. The maintenance allowance is based upon the estimated cost of maintaining a modest standard of living in the country of assignment.

For Scholar Grantees

Fulbright senior scholar grants have three components: (1) travel and relocation, (2) monthly maintenance, and (3) monthly stipend. Additional funds may be included in your grant as special allowances and are described separately. Grant benefits are based upon the estimated cost of maintaining a modest standard of living in the country of assignment. Benefits are not intended to duplicate U.S. salary levels or the standard of living of U.S. diplomatic personnel. Grant benefits authorized by ECA are paid in U.S. dollars through the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES).

1. Travel and Relocation
 - a. Unaccompanied and/or Excess Baggage

b. Relocation Allowance for expenses such as visa fees, permits, medical exams, immunizations, etc. This is a fixed sum in each grant and may not reimburse all expenses completely.

2. A monthly **maintenance allowance** is provided to cover recurring subsistence needs such as housing, fuel, utilities, and food.

3. Monthly **base stipend**

INFORMATION NEEDED PRIOR TO YOUR ARRIVAL

Travel to Ghana

Grantee air travel is coordinated by the travel agency, HRG Worldwide, which will bill IIE or CIES directly for the costs of your tickets. HRG staff will assist you with your reservation and then send your reservation to IIE or CIES for approval. You must book a round-trip ticket with a return date that corresponds to the grant end date. All air travel and all air shipments paid for with United States Government funds must conform to the Fly America Act, which requires that all such travel and shipments be on “U.S. flag” airlines where such service is available.

Visas and Residence/Work/Research Permits

Grantees are advised to bring copies of all certificates - marriage, birth, driver's licenses, etc. Please make photocopies of the first two pages of your passports, which should be kept separate from your passport in case of loss or theft. It is advisable to bring extra passport photos for obtaining visas and conducting other business. We also recommend that you scan your passport data page and all other documents, and send these as attachments to yourself at a web-based e-mail address.

Visas

The Government of Ghana (GOG) requires that U.S. citizens obtain visas for all visits to Ghana. The U.S. and Ghana have a reciprocal agreement that authorizes multiple-entry visas for up to five years. Therefore, Fulbright grantees who plan to travel outside Ghana within six weeks of their arrival should apply for multiple-entry tourist visas, **as well as appropriate visas for all other countries they intend to visit while in Ghana.** Fulbrighters need only a tourist visa to enter Ghana. On arrival at a Ghanaian port of entry (usually, the airport in Accra) most visitors to Ghana are given a maximum 60 days’ stay (a few may be given 30 days). After arrival, visitors may either extend the 60-day permit (in the case of those who need to remain longer than 60 days but not more than 6 months), or apply for a one-year “Residence Permit” (in the case of visitors who need to be here longer than 6 months. PAS will assist Fulbrighters to obtain a one-year residence permit after their arrival in Ghana. The one-year permit costs about \$120 in local currency (GhC 200) payable by the Fulbright grantee. It comes with a one-year multiple-entry visa. Residence permit processing generally takes between 4-6 weeks during which time the Fulbrighter’s passport will be in the possession of the Government of Ghana. **Grantees who**

plan to travel within the first two months of arrival should apply for Ghanaian multiple-entry visas in the U.S. before they depart for Ghana. Any who plan to travel to Nigeria after arrival in Ghana should also apply for the Nigerian visa before they depart the U.S. Fulbrighters who will be in Ghana for six months or less may apply for extensions to their visas after arrival. The cost of an extension is about \$24 per month of extension requested. Bring at least four passport size photos.

Research Permits and Research Clearance

No research permits are required for Ghana. A letter from a head of the Ghanaian institution or department of the university where the Fulbrighter plans to work that expresses clearly an agreement/intention to collaborate or work with the grantee, would be enough to serve the purpose of a Research Permit.

Fulbright grantees and their dependents are not allowed to accept paid employment while in Ghana. To be eligible, the local institution for which a visitor would work must apply to the Ministry of the Interior for permission to hire the visitor. Such permission is not easily granted.

Sending and Receiving Mail

Personal mail

Fulbright scholars and students have been approved for access to the diplomatic pouch to receive first-class letter mail only (maximum of two pounds). Magazines, newspapers, videocassettes, and package mail are not authorized. First class letter mail means just that. It is wise to bring sufficient U.S. postage stamps with you for your first-class mail back to the United States. U.S. stamps may also be ordered on-line. The Department of State accepts no liability for loss or damage. First-class mail via the pouch can take up to two weeks or more for delivery.

The address format for correspondence is as follows:

Your name (F)
2020 Accra Place
Dulles, VA 20189-2020

NOTE: It is very important that the above address format be followed, if the Fulbrighters decides to use that address.

Books and Educational Materials Sent by Diplomatic Pouch

Fulbrighters have access to the diplomatic pouch for sending a maximum of four 8.5"x11" copy paper-size boxes of books and other education materials. **NO ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT (INCLUDING CAMERAS) PERMITTED.** For additional information on the exact dimensions, address information, and recommendations please consult the *Instructions for Shipment of Books and Educational Materials by Fulbright Scholars* document, which is included in your pre-departure orientation packet.

These pouch privileges are provided by the U.S. Embassy on a one-time, one-way basis only; materials cannot be sent back to the U.S. by pouch at any time during your stay. All package mail in excess of the four permitted boxes will be returned to the U.S. at your expense.

CAUTIONARY NOTE: In the past, abuse by several Fulbright scholars caused near revocation of privileges for all program participants. Anyone who violates pouch regulations will be barred from use and will have to make other arrangements for handling personal and professional correspondence.

Customs Restrictions on Professional and Personal Affects

Besides the limited pouch shipment and airline excess baggage, grantees may airmail materials addressed to themselves via international mail, but are subject to paying customs duty at the local post office before taking possession of the materials. All goods taken into the host country must be declared. There are no duties levied on equipment, such as computers, that are imported for personal use. Firearms may not be brought in without prior arrangements with the Department of Customs and the host country police department. Pets require special handling and prior clearance with the Department of Animal Health before they can be imported into the host country. Please be aware that additional transit stops may also require clearance when traveling with pets. The Community Liaison Office at the U.S. Embassy can provide additional information on this process.

Schooling for Dependents

There are several international-standard elementary (primary) schools in Accra, Kumasi and Cape Coast. Yearly tuition runs from \$8,000 to \$15,000. Since space at these schools is limited, arrangements for placement should be made well in advance. PAS will provide Fulbrighters with the latest information on prospective schools.

There are currently several secondary schools that cater to expatriate children in Accra and Kumasi. Please be aware that places are limited and grantees will need to make arrangements in advance in order to be certain their children can be enrolled.

There are a number of pre-schools and nursery schools and enrollment is usually not difficult to secure.

PAS AND EMBASSY SUPPORT

In an effort to support U.S. Fulbright scholars/students and their families, the following services are provided by PAS and the Embassy:

Security

Street crime and residential burglaries are an increasing problem. Fulbrighters are advised not to walk downtown or in parks after dark, as muggings occur frequently. As in any major city in the

U.S., people are cautioned to watch valuables at all times. Men should carry wallets in a front trousers pocket. Women should carry tightly closed purses held securely to their sides. There are frequent reports of thieves snatching jewelry and other objects from open vehicle windows while vehicles are stopped in heavy traffic. Carjackings are not uncommon but seem to come in spurts, so use caution, particularly when driving at night. To reduce the incidence of residential break-ins, most homes have walls around them with 24-hour security guards at the entrance. Travelers' checks, passports and other valuables should not be left in a hotel room; check all important documents and valuables in a hotel safety deposit box. Better yet, leave non-essential jewelry and irreplaceable items at home in the U.S.

At their PAS briefing, Fulbrighters should ask about areas of the city and the country where they need to be especially alert. They can also ask for recommendations for protecting personal belongings at home and when traveling. Please read the Consular Information Sheet for Ghana carefully. The most current version can be obtained from the State Department website: <http://travel.state.gov/ghana.html>

Please use caution when traveling to national parks or nature preserves. Travelers should only use the services of reputable travel firms or knowledgeable guides when traveling on safaris or to nature preserves. Safaris are best undertaken with a minimum of two vehicles so that there is a back-up in case of mechanical failure.

Arrival and Temporary Lodging

All grantees will be met and assisted upon arrival, if they send their arrival details at least a week in advance. A PAS representative will also be on hand to meet and assist incoming Fulbrighters at the airport. It is preferable for grantees to arrive on weekdays rather than weekends. Grantees must provide the appropriate CIES and IIE program officers with their final itineraries **at least 3 weeks in advance** so that those officers can inform PAS of your travel schedules.

Universities in Ghana provide furnished housing for lecturers and offer them temporary hotel accommodations if permanent housing is not ready when they arrive. University housing is not provided for senior researchers or Fulbright students. Fulbright researchers and U.S. students must arrange their own accommodations. If requested to do so, PAS will arrange for temporary accommodations, at the grantee's expense, for a few days until the grantee is able to find permanent lodgings.

U.S. Embassy Access

The Embassy issues Fulbrighters badges for access to Embassy offices once they complete the newcomer's in-brief. Please arrange to visit the Embassy within one week of your arrival.

Local Banking and Currency Arrangements

In order to obtain local currency, Fulbright grantees may open bank accounts at the Standard Chartered Bank, High Street Branch (the U.S. Mission's local bankers – recommended), or at other local commercial banks, after they have obtained resident permits. PAS would facilitate

the process for them. Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) are also readily available and accept Visa- and Mastercard-branded ATM cards. Fulbrighters may use such cards to obtain local currency from ATM. Furthermore, some U.S. banks have arrangements with Barclays Bank which permit account holders to gain access to their U.S. accounts through local Barclays Bank branches. Fulbrighters should investigate this possibility before traveling to Ghana. Additionally, there are hundreds of Forex Bureau (or Bureau de Change) all over the country which accept US Dollars and other major currencies in exchange for local currency. They perform reverse accommodation exchange as well. However, Fulbrighters may exchange only their U.S. Dollars cash at these agencies.

Prior to their departure from the U.S., Fulbrighters should consult their U.S. banks concerning overdraft privileges. When mail is delayed, scholars and students may not have current information about account balances. PAS does not encourage the use of credit cards for payment of goods and services in Ghana. However, Visa and MasterCard may be used at ATMs to obtain local currency from local ATM machines.

Local Health Services and Access to Embassy Health Facilities

Fulbrighters should enter their host country with an up-to-date yellow fever vaccination. A current tetanus immunization is also advised. In addition, vaccines for hepatitis A, hepatitis B, typhoid, and current booster/vaccines against childhood diseases (tetanus diphtheria, polio, and measles/mumps/rubella) are strongly recommended for adults, as well as children. For additional information please consult the Centers for Disease Control's website, <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm>.

Adequate medical care is available through the local economy. Therefore, Fulbrighters are not granted access to the Embassy health facility. The country has a number of clinics and government and privately operated hospitals. Healthcare in Ghana can be expensive. There are a number of private medical practitioners, dental, and optical facilities. Emergency paramedical services are available through Medical Rescue International (MRI). Both the Embassy's Health Unit and the Community Liaison Office have contact lists for recommended medical practitioners and emergency facilities, and these lists are furnished to incoming Fulbright grantees.

Traveler's medical insurance, particularly emergency evacuation coverage is strongly recommended, especially for grantees based outside the capital city. The Fulbright grant provides limited medical and medical evacuation (medevac) coverage for the grantee only. The cost of medical insurance and medevac insurance for dependents must be paid by the Fulbrighter. Fulbrighters based outside the capital should explore membership in a local medical evacuation service that transports injured or ill members from rural areas to the capital or another city; these may be less expensive than worldwide services. Fulbrighters are strongly encouraged to deposit copies of their medical evacuation coverage documents with PAS for their assistance in case of emergencies.

Malaria is a serious problem in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially for grantees traveling outside urban areas. Please take precautions and be familiar with the symptoms so that you seek

treatment early. Proper precautions, such as malaria prophylaxis, boiling and filtering water, (or drinking any of the fine-quality locally-produced bottled water products), washing fruits and vegetables, etc., should be taken to avoid disease. Malaria prophylaxis medication is available on the local market. Grantees are advised to check with their physicians to make sure that these medications are compatible with other medications that they might be taking.

Prescription medications, over-the-counter drugs, first aid supplies, and sundry items can be found at several local pharmacies. PAS includes a list with the welcome package of information. Grantees taking prescription medications should either bring enough to last through their assignment or find out the international name of each prescription drug, since prescription drug names often differ from those used in the U.S.

Please carry with you basic information, such as your Fulbright medical report, that will enable a medical professional to quickly help you should it become necessary. Seek the guidance of your personal physician prior to departure from the U.S. in selecting basic health information records to bring with you.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Permanent Housing and Household Goods

Local universities provide furnished housing for Fulbright lecturers and their families. Fulbright lecturers should communicate with their department heads regarding housing and other facilities.

Fulbright researchers and students are responsible for finding their own housing. Housing can be very expensive. There are private bed-and-breakfast accommodations and furnished service apartments available on a month-to-month arrangement or short-term basis. PAS can provide contact information for these upon request.

Household effects are readily available and inexpensive. Accra and other major cities have K-Mart- and Wal-Mart-like stores that offer a wide variety of consumer goods. There are several shopping malls and convenience stores in the capital city. Imported foods/groceries are expensive by U.S. standards. Tap water can be safely used for cooking.

The television system used in Ghana is PAL. Satellite television service is widely subscribed to and costs about US\$25-40 per month for a package that includes news, sports and movie channels.

Computers and Other Electronic Equipment

As Fulbrighters do not have duty-free privileges, technically all computers and electronic equipment brought into the country, and which are not for personal use, must be taken out of the country or duty must be paid. Other Fulbrighters have worked out arrangements with their host universities to donate their computer to the university at the end of their stay in exchange for the university obtaining duty-free entry. Fulbrighters are advised not to send computers as

unaccompanied baggage because of the likelihood of theft and damage.

Power outages and power fluctuations are quite common and can destroy a computer without proper protection. PAS recommends that Fulbrighters purchase not only a transformer to step down local electric power from 220 volts to 110 for your computer and other equipment which run only on 110 volts, but also a heavy-duty surge protector and a voltage regulator. All three can be purchased in-country. However, the best solution is to bring a laptop, which does not require a transformer--one which is built to handle a variable power range (e.g. 90 – 240 volts). One Fulbrighter suggested that bringing his own laser printer “saved” him as a lecturer, as getting copies made at the university can be a tedious process.

The larger cities offer a variety of commercial e-mail and Internet service providers at reasonable rates. Modems that provide wireless internet access are available and are relatively inexpensive (about US\$35-45). University-provided internet service is only available in the departments and offices.

Academic Life

The University of Ghana (UG) is the country's national/premier institution of higher learning and has an enrollment of more than 45,000 students at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The University's website address is <http://ughana.gh.edu>. There also five other state-owned universities, in addition to several private universities and colleges. Two more public universities are planned and will be built in the Brong Ahafo and Volta regions.

Academic Calendar

The academic year runs from August through May. There are two semesters: August-December and January-May. Accordingly, Fulbright lecturers should plan to arrive in early or mid August. While classes may not actually start on dates scheduled, course assignments are often decided during the last semester of the previous academic year. Given this, lecturers must be present before classes are scheduled to start.

Teaching Requirements, Attendance, & Staff Hours

Lecturers may be assigned up to four courses due to staff shortages in various departments. As stated in the Fulbright grant, PAS expects all lecturers to fulfill their professional responsibilities, including class attendance, faculty meetings, special projects, etc. Lecturers should communicate with their department heads as soon as possible to get some idea of classes to be assigned. However, Fulbright lecturers should also take note of workload assigned to them, and, if it looks as if his/her department is seriously unbalanced in assignments, to let PAS know.

Phoning Home & Mobile Phones

1-800 numbers cannot be accessed from Ghana. Use of international long-distance calling cards is very limited. Calls to the U.S. via landlines or cell phones cost between US 7 cents to US 13 cents per minute to the U.S. PAS can provide information on local phone services.

Most Fulbrighters find it impossible to live without a cell phone. There are several companies—Airtel, Glo, MTN, tiGO and Vodafone-- and mobile networks are ever-expanding. American phones, unless compatible with the GSM900 system, will not be compatible with the host country system which is GSM 900. Mobile phones purchased in Europe should work. It is very easy to purchase a cell phone (basic through sophisticated) locally and get connected with a SIM card and call credit – all under an hour. The trend is movement away from landlines. Wireless “home/office” phones are becoming very common, and they are very easy to acquire. Getting connected to the traditional landline service may take weeks, even months. University-provided housing for lecturers rarely comes with landline phones.

Local Transportation and the Used Car Market

Fulbrighters who plan to drive should obtain an international driver's license from the American Automobile Association (AAA) before leaving the United States. Excessive speed, unpredictable local driving habits, poor vehicle maintenance and the lack of basic safety equipment on many vehicles are daily hazards. Also, vehicle travel outside major cities at night should be avoided due to the poor condition of the roads and the threat of banditry. High clearance or four-wheel drive vehicles are essential for driving outside the major cities and to the game parks. During the rainy season, many roads are passable only with four-wheel drive vehicles. Japanese vehicles are common in Ghana, and therefore spare parts are easily available.

Fulbrighters are not granted duty-free privileges to purchase or import vehicles. For that reason, Fulbrighters are advised not to import vehicles, as import duty is very expensive and delays are common in clearing vehicles through customs. PAS and the Embassy cannot assist with customs clearance.

Scholars who plan to drive are advised to look for a used vehicle upon their arrival in the host country. Prices are high by American standards (US \$7,000 or more depending on the type of car), but most grantees can sell the vehicle for approximately the same amount upon departure. Car rental is possible but also expensive. PAS cannot provide official vehicles for personal use.

Depending upon where you live, it may be possible to call for a taxi by phone, especially if you can identify a reliable driver. Public transportation is not considered to be very reliable and safe. Even long distance travel in modern buses can be unsafe, because of criminal activity aboard the buses and hazardous driving conditions.

Roads are generally poorly maintained with numerous potholes even on major thoroughfares.

Other Websites or Resource Material

Consular Information Sheet	http://travel.state.gov/ghana.html
Fulbright Association	http://www.fulbright.org
Fulbright Community on State Alumni	http://alumni.state.gov/fulbright

Africanews <http://www.africanews.org/west/ghana/>
News, updated daily, culled from local and regional papers and news services.

Major Newspapers

Local newspapers available are: Daily Graphic, Ghanaian Times, The Mirror, Weekly Spectator, and several privately-owned newspapers.

Radio

There are more than 25 FM radio stations Fulbrighters can tune in to in Accra alone, including BBC, Radio France International and VOA. FM radio is available in all ten regions of the country. English and local languages are used. Stations cater to a variety of tastes. Phone-in programs are very popular.

Television

The national broadcaster – Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) – currently transmits both analogue and digital signals. There are several privately-owned TV stations providing regular as well as satellite/cable services. However, it is only GBC that has nationwide coverage.

TV programming is generally both local and foreign (including some American – Oprah, Medical Detectives, CSI, Ghanaian, Nigerian, Indian, American and European movies, South African, Indian and Colombian soaps). Most programs on TV are in English.

FULBRIGHT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Fulbright award requires submission of two reports: 1) at the interim or mid-point of the grant and 2) a final report prior to departing from the host country. Grantees will receive instructions from CIES or IIE, as appropriate, on how to file reports on-line.

Public Holidays in Ghana

In addition to observing American holidays, the U.S. Embassy also observes almost all Ghanaian holidays. The following is the Embassy's 2012-2013 holiday schedule:

2012

January 1 (2)	New Year's Day	American/Local
January 16	M.L. King Day	American
February 20	Presidents' Day	American
March 6	Independence Day	Local
April 6	Good Friday	Local
April 9	Easter Monday	Local
May 1	May Day	Local
May 25	Africa Union Day	Local
May 28	Memorial Day	American
July 1(2)	Republic Day	Local
July 4	Independence Day	American
September 3	Labor Day	American
September 21	Founder's Day	Local
October – TBA*	Eid-ul-Fitr	Local
October 8	Columbus Day	American
November 11 (12)	Veterans Day	American
November 22	Thanksgiving Day	American
December - TBA	Eid-ul-Adha	Local
December 25	Christmas Day	American/Local
Dec. 26	Boxing Day	Local

2013

January 1	New Year's Day	American/Local
January 14	M.L. King Day	American
February 18	Presidents' Day	American
March 6	Independence Day	Local
March 29	Good Friday	Local
April 1	Easter Monday	Local
May 1	May Day	Local
May 25 (27)	Africa Union Day	Local
May 26	Memorial Day	American
July 1(2)	Republic Day	Local
July 4	Independence Day	American

()# = *Actual Day Off*
 * TBA = *To Be Announced*